

point out and claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. Applicants have amended the Claims to overcome these rejections.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-3 and 6-9 were rejected by the Examiner under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Anway.

Applicants respectfully traverse and submit that the present invention is different from Anway in many important respects.

In the first place, the present invention is directed to detection of geometric irregularities (such as corrosion pits and welds) within a structure. The structure need not be a pipeline containing a fluid. Anway is directed to detection of leaks in pipelines. In other words, for the invention of Anway to work, the pipeline must contain fluid that is actually leaking.

In the second place, the present invention operates with probes that actively generate a wave. The probes then detect waves that are reflected from a geometric irregularity of the structure. Anway does not generate waves. Anway relies on waves generated by the leak. The detectors of Anway only receive those waves.

In the third place, the probes of the present invention are placed anywhere on the structure. They detect a geometric irregularity along a length of the structure on one side of both probes. Anway requires that a detector be placed on either side of a leak.

In the fourth place, the probes of the present invention need only have a small displacement from each other. As discussed on page 7, line 14, a suitable displacement distance

is only four inches. If this example were used in Anway, Anway would detect a leak only within those four inches.

In the fifth place, the present invention uses time shifting representing the distance between the two probes. The maximum correlation occurs when the time shift corresponds to a situation where the probes are at the same location. Anway shifts the signals so that the correlation represents equal distance of two detectors from the leak.

In the sixth place, the probes of the present invention are not operated simultaneously. A first long wave is transmitted and detect using a first probe position, then a next from a second probe position.

Claim 1 has been amended to more clearly recite these differences.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 4-5 were rejected by the Examiner under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 4,083,229 issued to Allen R. Anway (hereinafter "Anway"), and further in view of U.S. Patent Publication No. US2001/0045129 filed by Andrew John Williams et al. (hereinafter "Williams").

Applicants respectfully traverse and submit that Claim 1 as amended is distinguishable over the prior art. Claims 4 and 5 are dependent on Claim 1 and allowable for the same reasons as Claim 1.

III. CONCLUSION

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's careful review of the application. Applicants have made an earnest effort to place this case in condition for allowance in light of the amendments and remarks set forth above. For the foregoing

reasons, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the rejections and full allowance of the claims as amended.

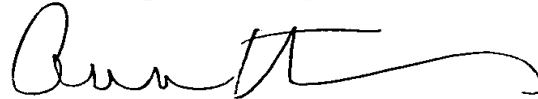
A Change of Correspondence Address is being submitted with this response.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 50-2148 of Baker Botts L.L.P.

If there are any matters concerning this application that may be cleared up in a telephone conversation, please contact Applicants' attorney at 512.322.2634.

Respectfully submitted,

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